

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 188486

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA

USINT BAGHDAD

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 188486

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

UNCLAS STATE 188486

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR AUGUST 8,
1975:

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US OF THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH
AMBASSADOR DINITZ LAST NIGHT, AND WHERE THAT LEAVES THE
SITUATION FROM AN AMERICAN PERCEPTION?

A. AS WE KNOW, THE SECRETARY MET WITH THE AMBASSADOR
FOR ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF. AMBASSADOR DINITZ BROUGHT
THE LATEST ISRAELI THINKINGS AND PRELIMINARY IDEAS--PRELIM-
INARY REACTIONS--AS THE AMBASSADOR SAID LAST NIGHT.

THE SECRETARY WILL BE SEEING THE AMBASSADOR AGAIN
PROBABLY TODAY OR TOMORROW. THERE IS NO TIME SET. I
CHECKED ON IT ABOUT TWO MINUTES AGO.

I WILL GET THE WORD TO YOU AS SOON AS THIS IS KNOWN.
AFTER THE SECRETARY MEETS AGAIN WITH AMBASSADOR DINITZ,
THEN HERMAN EILTS, OUR AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT, WILL RETURN TO
CAIRO IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO, BUT I CANNOT GIVE YOU

ANYTHING SPECIFIC ON THAT.

Q. WHY IS THIS SECOND MEETING NECESSARY? WHEN IS THE
SECOND MEETING ANTICIPATED?

A. AS AMBASSADOR DINITZ INDICATED LAST NIGHT, HE GAVE
SOME PRELIMINARY ISRAELI IDEAS, AND HE IS WAITING FOR
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 188486

ADDITIONAL IDEAS. THAT IS WHY HE WILL BE SEEING THE
SECRETARY AGAIN.

Q. MAYBE YOU CAN CLARIFY ONE SLIGHTLY CONFUSING
POINT. IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE ISRAELI REACTION
WOULD NOT REALLY BE SOLIDIFIED UNTIL AFTER THE
CABINET HAD MET ON SUNDAY.

ISN'T AMBASSADOR EILTS GOING TO BE WAITING FOR THAT
MEETING, AND WHATEVER MESSAGES ARE TRANSMITTED BACK,
BEFORE HE RETURNS TO CAIRO?

A. I CANNOT ANSWER THAT. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT PLANS ARE. I DO NOT HAVE THE DETAILS--CANNOT GET INTO THE DETAILS OF WHAT THEY DISCUSSED LAST NIGHT--WHETHER A CABINET MEETING IS, OR IS NOT NECESSARY. I JUST DON'T KNOW.

Q. YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT A PRELIMINARY REACTION THAT AMBASSADOR DINITZ BROUGHT YESTERDAY. THERE IS GOING TO BE ANOTHER MEETING EITHER TODAY OR TOMORROW.

A. PROBABLY TODAY OR TOMORROW. YES.

Q. ALL RIGHT. SO IN OTHER WORDS, AMBASSADOR EILTS IS GOING TO BE GOING BACK IN ANY EVENT, BEFORE THE ISRAELI CABINET COULD MEET ON SUNDAY, IS THAT CORRECT?

A. PRESUMABLY, YES.

Q. WITH A PRELIMINARY REACTION?

A. I DO NOT KNOW. LET'S WAIT UNTIL AMBASSADOR DINITZ HAS HIS OTHER MEETING THAT HE INDICATED HE WOULD BE HAVING. THE SECRETARY CONFIRMED, TOLD ME TODAY, THAT HE WOULD BE MEETING WITH HIM TODAY OR TOMORROW TO SEE HOW THE TWO PRINCIPALS WISH TO CHARACTERIZE THE RESULTS OF BOTH MEETINGS.

I WAS CHARACTERIZING LAST NIGHT'S HOUR AND A HALF MEETING, WHICH, AS AMBASSADOR DINITZ SAID, WERE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 188486

PRELIMINARY REACTIONS TO THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS.

HE OBVIOUSLY, IS WAITING FOR FURTHER INFORMATION FROM HIS GOVERNMENT TO RELAY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Q. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PRESS REPORTS TODAY WHICH SUGGEST ON THE BASIS OF STATEMENTS MADE BY THE PRESIDENT LAST NIGHT, BY AMBASSADOR DINITZ LAST NIGHT, BY DEFENSE MINISTER PERES, THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE RAPIDLY APPROACHING A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION. DOES THE SECRETARY SHARE THIS OPTIMISM? DOES HE THINK IT IS OVERRATED OR UNWARRANTED?

A. NO. AS FAR AS WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID, HE WAS QUESTIONED EXTENSIVELY CONCERNING THESE NEGOTIATIONS, AND I AM NOT GOING TO INTERPRET OR ENLARGE UPON WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID, OBVIOUSLY.

ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT, YES, THE PARTIES ARE MAKING HEADWAY, BUT THEY STILL HAVE SOME HARD DECISIONS TO MAKE. THE FACT THAT THE TALKS ARE CONTINUING, THAT IN ITSELF IS A SIGN OF PROGRESS. BUT I THINK I WOULD LIKE

TO LEAVE IT RIGHT THERE FOR NOW.

Q. WELL, WOULD YOU AGREE WITH THE CHARACTERIZATION OF YOUR STATEMENT AS TRYING TO POUR A LITTLE BIT OF COLD WATER ON SOME OF THE ENTHUSIASM THAT IS COMING OUT OF ISRAEL?

A. NO, YOU HAVE MY STATEMENT. IT IS UP TO YOU TO INTERPRET IT THE WAY YOU WANT. I DON'T WANT TO COMPARE WHAT I HAVE JUST SAID TO OTHER PEOPLE'S STATEMENTS IN OTHER CAPITALS.

Q. BUT WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT HARD DECISIONS YET TO BE MADE, THAT CERTAINLY DOESN'T SOUND TERRIBLY OPTIMISTIC.

A. THAT IS YOUR INTERPRETATION. I AM GIVING YOU THE FACTS AS WE SEE IT--THE SITUATION AS WE SEE IT.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 188486

Q. THE POINT IS THAT ONE OF THE REASONS THE SECRETARY'S MISSION FAILED LAST MARCH WAS BECAUSE OF AN EXCESS OF OPTIMISM IN ADVANCE OF THE FINAL NEGOTIATIONS. IS THAT BEING REPEATED NOW, IN HIS BELIEF?

A. I JUST DO NOT WANT TO CHARACTERIZE THE COMMENTS COMING OUT ON OTHER CAPITALS WITH REGARD TO THESE NEGOTIATIONS. I AM GIVING YOU WHAT --

Q. I WAS ASKING YOU TO COMMENT ON THE PRESS REPORTS WHICH SEEM TO BE OPTIMISTIC.

A. I DON'T WISH TO COMMENT ON THE PRESS REPORTS, OR ABOUT COMMENTS COMING OUT OF OTHER CAPITALS. I JUST DON'T WANT TO GET INTO IT. I AM GIVING YOU OUR ASSESSMENT AS OF RIGHT NOW, AND I THINK THAT IS THE WAY THAT WE SHOULD HANDLE THIS.

Q. YESTERDAY YOU CATEGORICALLY DENIED--"CATEGORICALLY" WAS YOUR WORD--THAT THE SECRETARY WOULD BE GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST AUGUST 18-20, IN THAT AREA. ARE YOU STILL HOLDING TO THAT?

A. THAT IS NOT WHAT I DENIED.

Q. WELL, IS HE GOING TO THE MIDDLE EAST ON AUGUST 18 TO 20?

A. LET ME GET IT STRAIGHT HERE FOR YOU. THE QUESTION THAT WAS ASKED TO ME WAS: IS THE REPORT THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE ATTACHED A NOTE TO THE LAST RELAY OF PROPOSALS TO ISRAEL URGING THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO

SPEED UP NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE HE WISHED TO GO TO THE AREA IN AUGUST. THAT WAS THE REPORT THAT I ADDRESSED, AND I DENIED THAT CATEGORICALLY. THEN I WENT ON TO SAY THAT WITH REGARD TO HIS TRAVEL PLANS, AND I CAN DO IT AGAIN TODAY, DESPITE WHATEVER MAY BE REPORTED IN THE PRESS, THERE ARE NO PLANS SET FOR THE SECRETARY TO GO TO THE AREA. FURTHERMORE, I CAN--AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, I AM NOT RULING OUT THAT HE IS GOING TO GO TO THE AREA, BUT THERE ARE NO PLANS SET.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 188486

Q. WHAT DAY WILL HE BE LEAVING?

A. I HAVE NO IDEA.

Q. HE ALMOST TOLD YOU, DIDN'T HE.

Q. DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE ANY REACTION OR RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENTS BY KING HUSSEIN THAT HE CONTEMPLATES TURNING TO THE SOVIET UNION FOR HIS ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENSES?

A. I DON'T HAVE REALLY ANY DIRECT COMMENT ON KING HUSSEIN'S REPORTED STATEMENTS. I THINK OUR POSITION ON THIS WHOLE SUBJECT HAS BEEN STATED VERY OFTEN. WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH BOTH HIS MAJESTY, THE KING, AND WITH THE

CONGRESS ON THIS MATTER, AND WE REMAIN HOPEFUL THAT A SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND.

Q. ARE YOU IN TOUCH WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON THE SUBJECT OF ARMS SALES TO THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. AS FAR AS I KNOW, WE ARE NOT IN TOUCH WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON THAT SUBJECT, NO.

Q. HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THE JAPANESE TERRORISTS GOING TO LIBYA?

A. I CAN GIVE YOU OUR REACTION TO THE EVENTS THAT HAVE OCCURRED. AS YOU KNOW, THE PLANE LANDED IN LIBYA AND IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE FOUR GUARANTORS, OR HOSTAGES, IF YOU WILL, -- THE TWO MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS AND THE TWO JAPANESE OFFICIALS -- ARE NO LONGER IN THE CUSTODY OF THE TERRORISTS. NATURALLY WE ARE PLEASED AND RELIEVED THAT ALL OF THE HOSTAGES IN KUALA LUMPUR HAVE BEEN RELEASED UNHARMED. WE ARE ALSO OBVIOUSLY VERY PLEASED THAT THE GUARANTORS THAT WENT IN THE AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN RELEASED. THE HOURS OF ANXIETY INFLICTED UPON THE HOSTAGES AND THEIR FAMILIES AND THE WOUNDING OF THE POLICEMEN IN KUALA LUMPUR HAS AROUSED ONCE

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 188486

AGAIN THE INDIGNATION AND REPUGNANCE OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD AGAINST TERRORISM. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT ALL THOUGHTFUL PEOPLE WILL JOIN US IN CONDEMNING THE OUTRAGEOUS ACTIONS OF THESE TERRORISTS.

MOREOVER, WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION BARRING SAFEHAVEN FOR TERRORISTS, SUCH AS THOSE INVOLVED IN THIS MOST RECENT EPISODE. HOPEFULLY THE KNOWLEDGE THAT NO COUNTRY WOULD ACCEPT TERRORISTS WOULD ACT AS AN EFFECTIVE DETERRENT AGAINST SUCH ABHORRENT BEHAVIOR.

THAT IS THE STATEMENT THAT I HAVE ON THIS.

Q. AS LONG AS THERE IS NO INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT BARRING SAFEHAVEN, WOULD YOU SHARE THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS THAT IT ACTED OUT OF HUMANE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE HOSTAGES?

A. I THINK, FRANKLY, THE STATEMENT THAT I JUST MADE STILL STANDS. WE FEEL THAT EVEN IN THE ABSENCE OF A CONVENTION, WE WOULD HOPE THAT NATIONS WOULD BAR SAFEHAVENS FOR THESE TERRORISTS. OBVIOUSLY, IT WOULD BE FAR PREFERABLE IF SUCH AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION COULD

- - - " - --" -

BE NEGOTIATED AND COME INTO EFFECT. FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, I WOULDN'T WANT TO WAIT FOR SUCH A CONVENTION TO BECOME A FACT OF LIFE. IN THE MEANTIME, I THINK WE OUGHT TO PUT THIS IDEA INTO ACTION AND WOULD HOPE THAT AS MANY COUNTRIES AS POSSIBLE WOULD PUT IT INTO ACTION.

Q. THE PRESIDENT IN HIS REMARKS TO PBS LAST NIGHT TALKED ABOUT THE RUSSIANS BEING HELPFUL--I FORGET THE PRECISE ADJECTIVE THE PRESIDENT USED --

Q. RESPONSIBLE.

A. RESPONSIBLE, YES.

Q. -- IN CONNECTION WITH THE MID-EAST PROBLEM. CAN YOU UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 188486

TELL US THE UNDERPINNINGS FOR THAT WORD, PLEASE?

A. I CAN'T EXPAND ON WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID, FRANKLY, ON IT. I THINK HE MADE HIMSELF VERY CLEAR THAT THEY HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE.

Q. HE DIDN'T GO INTO ANY SPECIFICS ON THAT. THAT IS
WHY I AM ASKING YOU.

A. WELL, I CANNOT GO INTO SPECIFICS.

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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